

Colombia

I. Spaniard and Indian in the Land of El Dorado

By J. A. Hammerton

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COLOMBIA is the land of the fabled El Dorado, one of the most interesting and persistent of American legends. Whenever a new chief came to power over an Indian tribe that dwelt upon the tableland of Bogotá, his installation was marked by elaborate ceremonial, a feature of which was his being covered entirely with gold dust (whence *el dorado*, or the golden one), and plunging into the sacred lake of Guatavita. His tribesmen, while he was in the water, cast gold and precious stones into the lake as votive offerings to the spirit of the place, who was the protector and inspirer of the chief in his reign over the tribe. Even in recent years there have been those who believed sufficiently in this old legend to contemplate the locating of the sacred lake and dredging the same for these imaginary treasures of gold.

Sir Walter Raleigh, in 1595, thought he had discovered it, but when the German, von Humboldt, in the nineteenth century concluded that no such lake existed, a near approach to cold truth had been made. Yet there was a time when the Spaniards so thoroughly believed the story that governors of Guiana were also styled governors of El Dorado, and, of course, in our own day the phrase has come to mean any place where treasure or

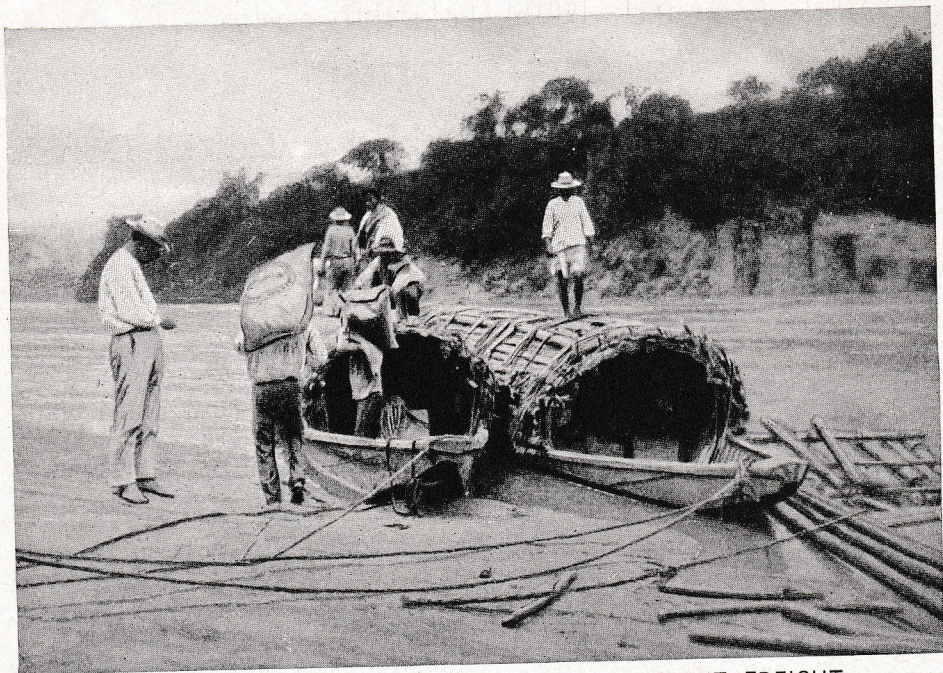
wealth may be acquired with little effort. Although the whole thing is no doubt a myth, there is a real sense in which Colombia might well claim to be the land of El Dorado, for there is in all the world no country so bounteously endowed by nature with mineral treasures or fertility of soil and climate. It has lacked only a stable government and industrial enterprise to turn the myth of El Dorado into an actuality of progress and prosperity. But politically the country has been for many generations the most turbulent of all the South American republics, having been engaged between 1830 and the end of the last century in no fewer than two international wars, nine civil wars, fourteen local rebellions and several military conspiracies, which drained the treasury of the country beyond any hope of recuperation other than might come from honest industry and development of their natural resources.

Thus what might have been—and what some day will be—one of the richest and most prosperous countries of the world remains one of the most backward, although the Colombians themselves talk a great deal about the high pitch of civilization to which they have attained. Their capital city, which on account of its situation in the high Andes has been called, not



REFRESHING FRUIT FOR ALL

Pineapples and bananas, oranges, lemons and limes, breadfruit, guavas and cashews, together with many common fruits of temperate zones, fill the stalls in Bogotá fruit market



LOADING UP THE BOATS WITH THEIR FRAGRANT FREIGHT

The coffee industry in Colombia is largely in the hands of American firms, who conduct the trade on business lines, of which the natives themselves seem incapable. These boats are being loaded with sacks of coffee at Girardot, and will then be taken down stream till they reach the steamers on the Magdalena, which carry their cargo to the great ocean-going craft

Photo, Ewing Galloway

inaptly, "the Lhasa of South America," is esteemed by the natives as the Athens of Spanish America, nor without reason, for the comparatively small ruling class have given themselves up to literary pursuits instead of to the commercial life, and many citizens of Bogotá are more interested in the varying forms of Spanish verse than in the material progress of their native land. Consequently, out of all proportion to the population, Colombia takes a high place among the Spanish-speaking countries in Hispanic literature; even the mother country honours many Colombian men of letters.

If the truth must be told, however, the cultured Colombian has been more content to discourse in choice Castilian about the natural beauties of his country, which are incontestable, and the progress it is going to make, than to take an active and practical part in the realization of that progress. Unlike most of the other South American countries, Colombia was slow to encourage the foreigner to come in with his money and his energy to develop the country. The

native Indians might well have been helped to rise above their present degraded condition, and even the negroes, who form an unhappy element in the population, could have been improved by sympathy and education. Scarcely anything has been done in these directions. Schooling of the elementary kind is free, but it is not compulsory, and very little of it goes to any but the white and to some of the half-white people.

These people have the usual Spanish-American distaste for trade, and indeed for enterprise in any shape. Their preference is for well-paid official posts, where they have security and not much to do. Politics is the occupation of the more active among them; the others are content to be civil servants. Both are a curse to the community and a bar to the advance of their country either in prosperity or in civilization.

A Minister of Finance in 1911 described the bureaucracy of Colombia as a "social calamity." There were far too many officials. They were paid better than they would have been in private employ, and they did far less work than private

COLOMBIA & ITS PEOPLES

employers would have required of them. Since then reforms have been made and there has been some improvement. But the "calamity" is not yet removed.

The cutting of the Panamá Canal has brought great opportunities to Colombia's door. The Republic might, if its ruling men had been far-seeing and energetic, have kept the territory through which the Canal runs. They were indignant when Panamá revolted in 1903, proclaimed its independence, was recognized by the United States, and gave the Americans the right to make the Canal across the isthmus which separated the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. They complained with some reason that the revolt of Panamá was largely the work



SAVOURIES FOR EPICURES

They are avocados, or alligator pears, this peon is offering for sale in Santa Marta. The oily marrow is eaten with lime-juice, spice, or pepper and salt

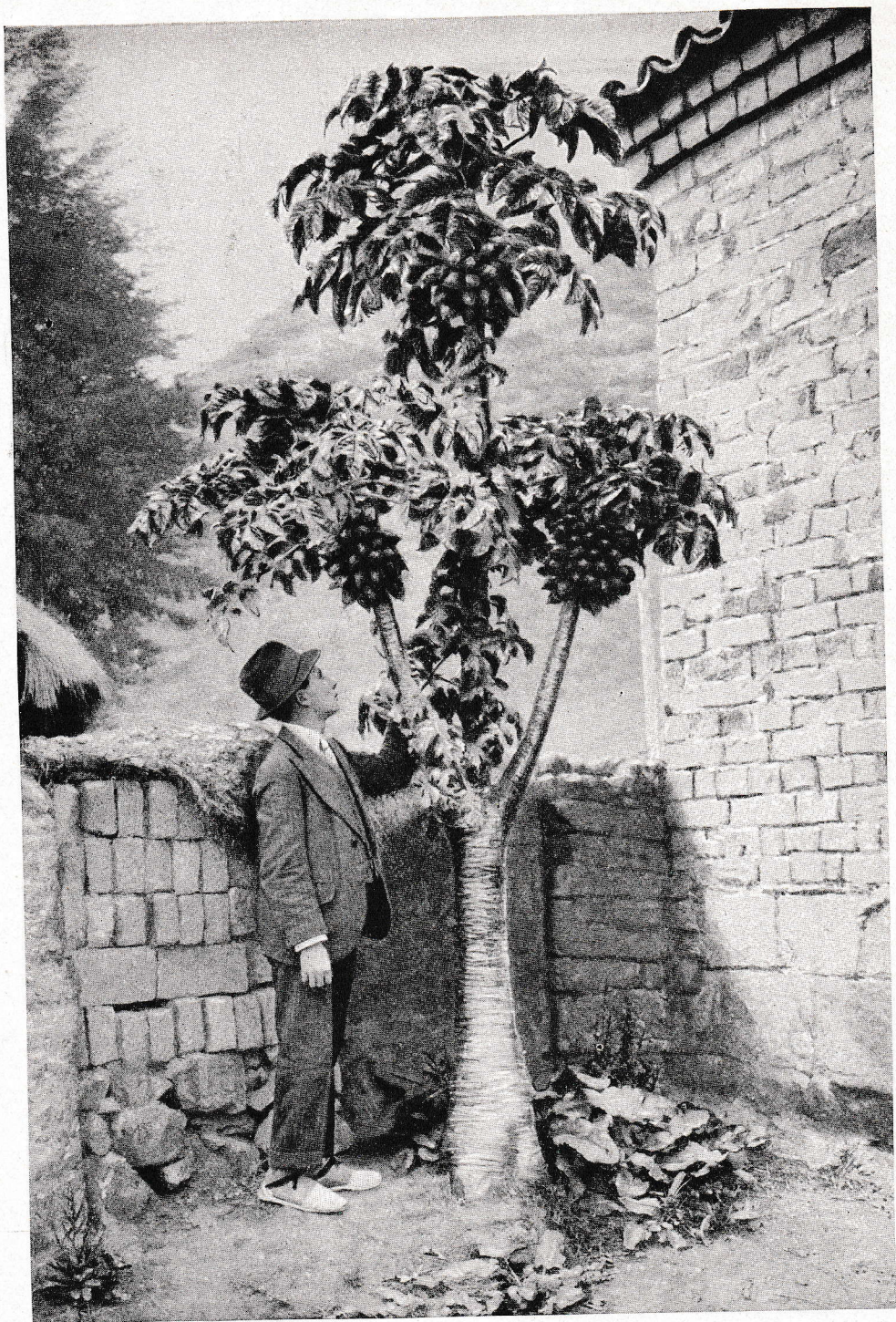


CHAMPION CHACHAFRUTO

Market gardening is profitable near the towns of Colombia. This young fellow is justifiably proud of the size of his beans, locally known as chachafruto

of Americans. What they did not seem to realize was that they might themselves have taken part in the great work if they had paid more heed to their country's interests and not been so intent upon their small political squabbles, which had always for their object the personal advancement of politicians.

When Colombia protested against what was called the theft of this territory by the United States there was a good deal of sympathy felt with the complaint. What had happened was plain enough. Panamá revolted against Colombia on November 3, 1903. Only fifteen days later the treaty which handed the Canal zone over to the United States was



INSPECTING HIS WELL-FRUITING PAPAW TREE

A small evergreen tree, native of South America, the papaw is cultivated in Colombia—and hardly anywhere else—for the sake of its fruit, a dingy orange-coloured oval, sometimes nearly a foot long with fleshy, gourd-like rind. Boiled or pickled, the fruit is eaten as a vegetable, and it also yields the proteid-ferment papain, used as a digestive



AS PLEASING TO THE EYE AS TO THE PALATE

Growing in thick clusters over the garden door, the granadillas form a pleasing spectacle. The plant is a species of passion-flower, and the blossoms are white and red, giving forth a strong and pungent scent. The fruit itself is greenish-yellow and attains a diameter of some six inches. The pulp is purple in colour and is sweet and slightly acid to the taste

COLOMBIA & ITS PEOPLES

signed at Washington. But the considered opinion of the world soon came round to approval of the result secured, questionable though the means of securing it might have been. The world needed the Canal. The United States Government was ready to build it and was sure to make it a competent job. It had been talked and written about for a great many years, and it looked as if Colombia was quite ready to let it go on being discussed for another half-century.

of them, have been immensely widened, though the capital and other important towns are still peculiarly isolated.

At the time when the passage quoted was written there were scarcely any railways in Colombia. There are not more than a few hundred miles of track even now. To reach the capital then meant a tedious journey on a river steamboat, across mountains on mule-back or in chairs carried by Indians, through desolate regions where the roads



COFFEE BEANS ON THE FIRST STAGE OF THEIR WAY TO THE CONSUMER

From the coffee plantations come long trains of mules bearing the beans, carried in well-filled sacks. The convoy seen above is on its way to one of the big warehouses where beans are stored prior to export. They are later shipped down the Magdalena, on their way to the port of Santa Marta, on the Caribbean Sea, the principal seaport of the trade

Photo, Ewing Galloway

Now it was going to be done. The Colombian protest therefore fell flat.

How changed was the position of the Republic after the isthmus had been pierced may be illustrated by a sentence from a book about the country published in 1887. It was, the writer said, "about as far distant by days, if not by miles, from New York as the interior of India, and quite as difficult to reach." Now the country, as a whole, has been brought quite near to New York and its trading prospects, if it chooses to take advantage

were little more than tracks worn by ox-carts and strings of baggage animals. Even now one has to face a journey of 540 miles in a stern-wheel steamer up the Lower Magdalena to the falls of La Dorada, then a railway stage of eighty miles through Andine passes to Ambalema, followed by another river trip of fifty miles in a still smaller vessel along the Upper Magdalena to Girardot, and finally a picturesque but fatiguing journey of 110 miles on the Colombia National and Sabana railways in order



WITH VERDURE CLAD: A PLANTATION IN THE MOUNTAIN REGION

Colombia's principal plantations are in the interior of the country, coffee and palms of many kinds growing luxuriantly on the higher altitudes inland. Peons supply the labour. They are fairly good workers, but rather heedless of the morrow and independent of spirit, asserting the opinion that to earn his own living does not make one man the servant of another



TUMBLING ASSORTMENT OF EARTHENWARE IN THE BOGOTÁ MARKET

Stacks of pots, ewers, dishes, and vessels of all shapes and sizes, fresh from the potter's wheel, litter the courtyard of the market. Down the centre runs a narrow cobble path flanked by the goods exposed for sale. Here buyer and seller conduct their business, extol the merit of their wares, and argue over prices asked or offered



COLOMBIAN OFFICIALS OF THE PASTO LAW COURTS

Some well-known figures in the world of Pasto jurisdiction are here seen grouped on the balcony of the Casa de Juzgado, or local Law Court. This capital-town of Nariño Department, with an estimated population of 28,000, is situated on the eastern flank of the most active of Colombia's volcanoes, the Pasto, 14,000 feet high, from the crater of which flows a copious stream charged with sulphuric acid

to reach Bogotá (formerly Bogotá, capital of the Chibcha Empire, benignly civilized, worshipping gods of Mercy, Wisdom, and Agriculture). Here the President lives and the business of the state is carried on, although there is also a presidential palace in the important town of Medellín.

With a climate that is described as "almost ideal" (wet from March to May and from September to November, but seldom very wet, and dry the rest of the year), and with freedom from tropical diseases, thanks to its high situation, nearly 9,000 ft., Bogotá might seem to be a very pleasant place to live in for those who are content with a quiet life and can provide their own amusements. The streets, it is true, are ill-paved, but they are wide and well planted with trees; the buildings are agreeable to the eye, mostly in the old Spanish style. Scarcely a house has more than one storey, and a great many are of the bungalow type. Their tiled roofs lend them a certain picturesqueness, and there are many corners which tempt one to linger and admire, such as that green spot in which the post-office stands.

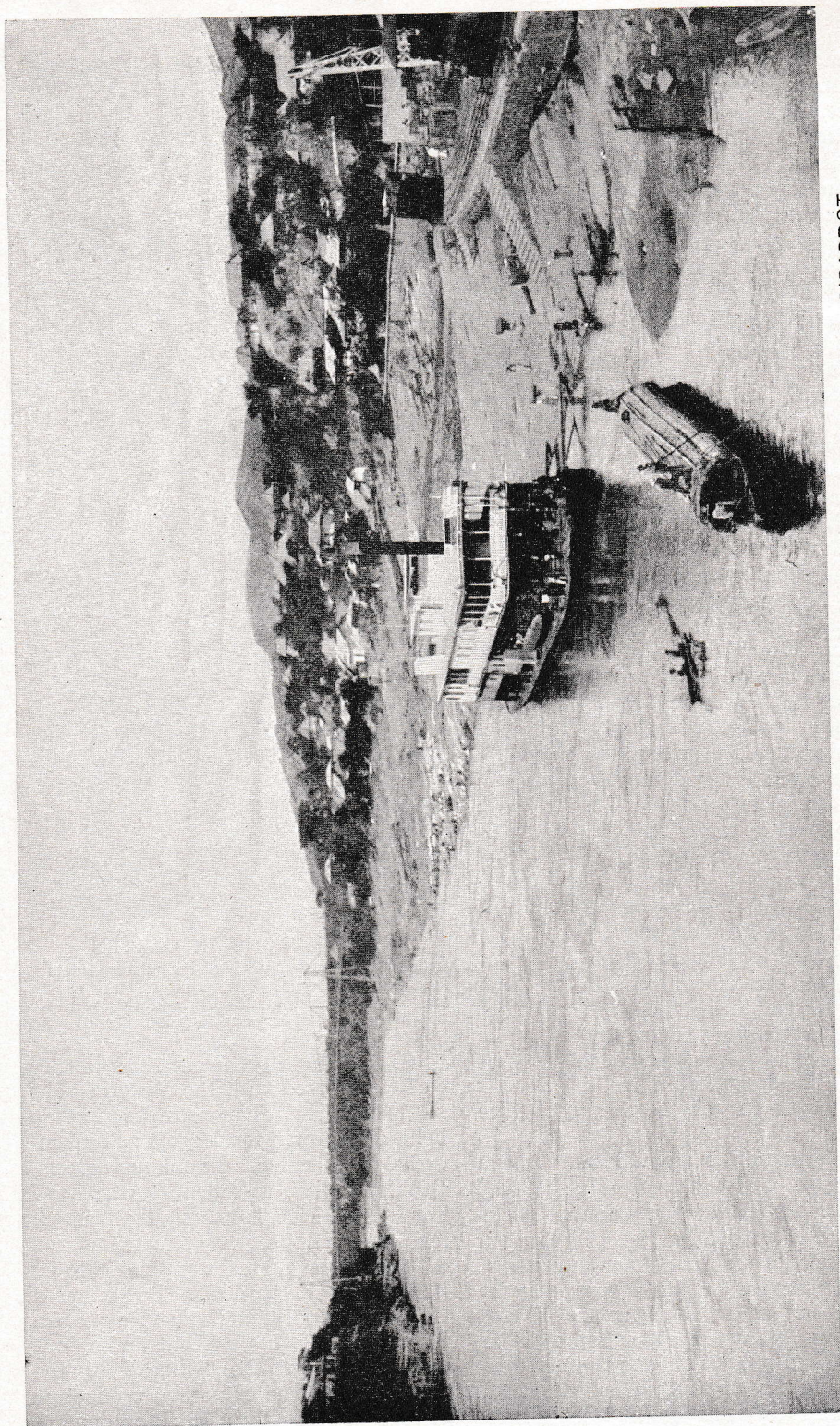
The situation is magnificent. Above the town tower the Guadalupe and Monserrato Hills. Many distant peaks are visible on a clear day. There is a glorious view of the Mesa de Herves, which is indeed a table (mesa, Latin mensa), for it has a level top from five to six miles across, while down its side for more than 3,000 ft. hangs a spotless white drapery of snow, gleaming like a new and shiny table-cloth. Not far from Bogotá is a waterfall, which is three



PRIZE FRUIT OF A COLOMBIAN GARDEN

This country of contrasts possesses many high-lying desert tracts where nothing flourishes save small wild potatoes, but elsewhere fruits abound in unlimited luxuriance, and this young gardener exhibits a basketful of large and luscious berries

times the height of Niagara and worthy to be compared with the Victoria Falls in Rhodesia. This provides electric light and power for Bogotá; Tequendama is its name. In many respects, therefore, this so-called "Athens of South America" is a desirable place of residence in spite of its remoteness and of what the Germans would call its klein-städtisch character. But it has a worse drawback than these. No one can live long in Bogotá without finding out the reason for the lethargy of the inhabitants. The climate is productive of energy, but only a small amount of energy can be expended with safety. Five



STERN-WHEELER ON COLOMBIA'S FAMOUS RIVER, THE RIO MAGDALENA, NEAR GIRARDOT

For many miles in its upper reaches the Magdalena has the aspect of a mountain torrent, and rushes like the Cauca down a steep incline between the rocky walls of the Central and Eastern Cordilleras; its lower course, however, presents a clear navigable waterway of over 600 miles, and its tranquil waters between Girardot and Honda are utilised by many steamers, all stern-wheelers. The suspension bridge in the distance connects the departments of Cundinamarca and Tolima

COLOMBIA & ITS PEOPLES

hours' work a day is all that can be wisely attempted. Those who try to do more, those who work very hard even during that limited time, soon find their nerves giving them trouble. A large amount of sleep appears to be necessary, though many who go there are for their first few nights unable to sleep.

The streets are, as a rule, deserted at night. The only sounds which break the stillness are the whistles of the policemen, who are obliged to sound them, whenever an alarm goes off in the centre of the town, to show that they are awake. The police are only on duty at night and they do not have a great deal to do then, though they are provided with lassoes for the catching of runaway offenders, and with revolvers as well. Even the pianos which are to be found in all houses of any pretension to style are seldom heard at night, and if there is music in public it is early over. Music is a favourite diversion with the Colombians; and as we have seen, they are also noted for the prevalence of literary ambition among them.

Politics and the Press

The number of those described as "men of letters" is surprising; almost everyone appears to have written either in prose or poetry. Yet the newspapers are mostly disappointing. They are political organs, devoted to the interest of this or that politician. They do not show the wide sweep of acquaintance with world affairs which is a feature of so many South American journals.

The Colombian constitution was copied from that of the United States, but the Colombians have had for a long time a much warmer feeling towards the French than towards their North American neighbours. The educated among them speak French, as a rule, as well as Spanish; their fashions and luxuries come from France. The North Americans are disliked for their "abrupt" manners and for the conduct of their Government over Panamá. But there was little substance in the Federal versus Central controversy which produced the Civil War of 1899-1903. The real dispute between the two parties was

as to which should be in office. The Liberals were ready to attack the Church because the Church did its best to keep them out of office. The Conservatives supported it for the same reason. Neither cared very deeply about religion or had any real enthusiasm for tolerance.

Bad Manners Breed Bad Feeling

In any case the toleration for other sects is sufficiently wide so far as public worship is concerned. Once there was reported in the American newspapers an attack on the houses of Protestants in Bogotá, and hard things were said about fanaticism. But the cause of the ill-feeling was discovered to be the behaviour of some Protestant foreigners, ill-bred, offensive persons who sat in a balcony watching the Corpus Christi procession and refused to take off their hats when the sacred Host was carried by them. This was especially foolish in Colombia, for there even the men go to church as a rule, which is not the case in most South American countries.

The politicians being what they are, a good many people say that what Colombia needs is a strong ruler of the Porfirio Diaz type. She had one for a time when President Reyes (1904-1909) was in power. He was dictatorial in his methods. In some departments he did good. But he did not make himself either sufficiently feared or sufficiently popular. He was the only president upon whose life an attempt had ever been made, and he was forced in the end to leave the country, saying bitterly that he had had enough of a people who would neither govern themselves nor let anyone govern them.

Relics of Old Pirate Days

For a long time after Spanish America became independent of Spain, Colombia was united with Venezuela and Ecuador. It had been one of the favourite Spanish colonies and had a particularly hard fight for its freedom. Although it is called after Columbus, it was not discovered by him, but by Alonso de Ojeda, one of the great navigator's companions. The Spaniards took away shipments of gold and silver for a great



STREET IN THE REGION OF BANANAS: RIO FRIO

The banana trees on the right indicate the region in which the small town of Rio Frio is situated. In this part of North Colombia immense banana plantations are cultivated and the fruit is carried to Santa Marta by a railroad especially constructed for the purpose. The Aruacos of the Santa Marta heights, more civilized than many of Colombia's wild tribes, take an important part in the industry



RESTING BY THE ROADSIDE IN THE UPLANDS OF COLOMBIA

The conditions of the country roads are such that motors or heavy traffic find them for the most part impassable. Mules, donkeys and oxen are the burden-bearers and tread the difficult tracks with sure-footed ease. Land travel among the uplands of the Republic has to be done on mule-back or in jolting ox-wagons and is an experience whose aching pains outweigh its pleasures

COLOMBIA & ITS PEOPLES

many years, and the fortifications with which they defended the port of Cartagena can still be seen ; it was necessary to build these to keep off the attacks of pirates in search of precious cargoes. One such pirate, who is said to have tried to raid Cartagena, was Sir Francis Drake ! Towards the end of the seventeenth century the attempt was made to start a Scottish colony at Darien. This was the scheme of William Paterson, the founder of the Bank of England, and it came to disaster largely on account of the climate.

Colombia, which is the fourth largest of the South American States, has the usual three climates of Central and South America. Its coasts, which are on both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, are hot and unhealthy. In its mountain regions the sun is tempered by the snows of the high peaks, which send down cool airs. Then there is a third region consisting partly of forests and partly of green prairies, which would pasture

millions of cattle if that industry were to be taken up. The forest areas are uninhabited except by savage Indians ; not all of them have yet been even explored. The forests have not, however, been so much of a misfortune to Colombia as her mountain ranges, which have separated the people into small communities cut off from one another, and made railway building very difficult.

This difficulty might have been more rapidly overcome if Colombian governments had behaved with such probity as to win the confidence of investors. Unfortunately they have frequently defaulted in their payment of interest on loans, and they have also been engaged in many disputes with foreigners who have tried to open up the country. For example, it is still not clear whether the Colombian Government has the right to purchase for £400,000 the undertaking of an English railway company, the Santa Marta, when it is completed. This uncertainty has prevented the



OLD STONE FOUNTAIN IN A COLOMBIAN PLAZA

If it could speak it would narrate many a strange tale of stirring scenes enacted in its vicinity, for Cundinamarca has played an important part in Colombian history. The whitewashed convent, terminating in the little church, forms a picturesque background. The religion of the Republic of Colombia is Roman Catholicism. Tolerance is extended to all others, so far as they conform to the law and to the general precepts of Christian morality



THE CATHEDRAL FRONTING THE PLAZA BOLÍVAR IN COLOMBIA'S CAPITAL

This chief plaza of Bogotá is named after Bolívar, the famous general and statesman, whose statue—a fine work in bronze—is its chief ornament. The town possesses the beautiful old Spanish cathedral, seen above, and, among other notable buildings, a university, library, and observatory, but the lack of easy communications with surrounding lands has hampered its prosperity, and the three railway schemes taken in hand are still incomplete

railway from being finished for a long time past. All that is operated is a section used for the conveyance of bananas to the coast. To complete the line would cost a million sterling. Naturally the company will not lay out this amount if they are to be forced to sell for less than half the cost as soon as the line is ready for traffic.

When the construction of a complete railway system is taken in hand, it will have to be planned from the beginning. The short lines which exist already can be of little help towards a scheme for opening up the country as a whole. They are all detached pieces. Trunk lines do not exist. Whether they would pay if they were brought into existence is not altogether certain, so it may be a long time before the money is subscribed to start their construction. Faith in Colombia as a field for investment must be recreated first.

It may be admitted that the defaults in payment of interest on loans have been rather the result of misfortune than of deliberate dishonesty. Even if the latter had been the cause, there would

not be much room for moral indignation in Europe. The terms on which the early loans were granted to the Republic were as dishonest as could be. The financial houses which arranged them acted like the worst kind of fraudulent money-lenders. The Republic did not receive more than a percentage of the sum for which its inhabitants were made liable. Large slices were taken off for commission, for brokerage, and other charges, and part had to be accepted in merchandise instead of in money.

Yet finance has always been the weak point of Colombian governments. Their paper money sank, for a variety of reasons, to a value deplorably low. The dollar came to be worth no more than a cent or so. That is to say, a note of which the face value was two shillings had only the purchasing power of a halfpenny. Thus it was common enough to pay a hundred dollars for a modest meal and thousands for a suit of clothes. The experience which came to Germany and Austria after the Great War had been habitual in Colombia for many years. This has been improved along with

COLOMBIA & ITS PEOPLES

much else, and now that the Panamá Canal has brought the country into closer touch with civilization it may be expected to mend its ways in all directions. Unless further rich deposits of precious metals should be discovered (which is not unlikely), it will never be a land of more than moderate prosperity, but it can supply several commodities of which the world stands in need. Coffee is its largest export. It could increase very largely its shipments of hides for leather and of rubber. Besides gold and silver, it supplies the European and North American markets with platinum and with the finest emeralds that are procurable anywhere. These

are found in limestone. Indian operatives are clever at working the steel bars pointed at one end with which the limestone is broken up so that the calcite in which the emeralds are embedded may be detached. Great care must be taken to avoid breaking the stones themselves.

The skill with which the Indians handle the bars, using just the amount of force necessary and no more, proves that they can be trained to use their intelligence. It is an English company which employs them. They make contracts to work for three months at a time, and during that period they do not leave the mine compounds. Work goes



BUSINESS CORNER AND PLAYGROUND IN SANTA FÉ DE BOGOTÁ

At this evening hour the usually busy market-street is deserted, save for the childish figures at play on its rugged surface. The long shop windows are shut and barred, but on the morrow they will be opened at an early hour and filled with tempting wares, for Bogotá is the chief town of Colombia, and can display choice goods from America, Britain, and several European countries

on night and day, but the workers have no objection to this. They are well treated, and they respond by doing their best.

The Colombian Indian, in general, is ready to undertake the heaviest toil with patience and surprising immunity from fatigue. He is docile and a lover of peace. "Naturally civil, kind-hearted and hospitable" is the description given by one who was American Minister to the Republic. He loves his patch of land. Something of those qualities implanted by Nature has been effaced, or at any rate overlaid by the brutality of man, but enough remains to show what the Indians might be. They are capable of warm affection in family relations. If they are timid and suspicious it is because they have good reason to fear and distrust the white man.

Of course these Indians are superstitious; they love the processional part of religion; they believe implicitly the most absurd tales, such as that about the finely carved marble pulpit in Cartagena Cathedral. This, it is related, was sent by a Pope as a present to the faithful people of the port between two and three hundred years ago. On the voyage out the ship which carried it was boarded by pirates, who threw it over the side as they had no use for such burdensome booty. The pulpit, however, refused to sink, and when the pirates had cleared off it was hauled into the ship again.

Unfortunately a second lot of pirates made their appearance, and this time the ship was set on fire. Down it went, with everything in it, excepting the pulpit. This floated as before, and beached itself near Cartagena as if it



DEFT AND DAINTY FACTORY GIRL OF BOGOTÁ

The town of Bogotá possesses many a modern establishment with up-to-date equipment, and in the light and airy hygienic laboratory of a well-known Spanish firm this pretty Colombian girl may be seen at her work of preparing small packing-cases

knew quite well where to go. On the beach it remained for many years, until an enterprising sea-captain about to sail for Spain thought he might as well take it to Spain and sell it there. This notion came to the knowledge of the Archbishop of Cartagena (it was apparently the first he had heard of the pulpit's arrival), and he informed the captain that it was the property of the cathedral. In spite of this the captain got the pulpit aboard and set sail. The Archbishop pursued him with a curse so terrible that immediately a storm arose and the vessel was lost with all hands. But the unsinkable pulpit floated back to Cartagena, and this time was picked up and placed in the cathedral where it belonged. Such stories as that the Indians

COLOMBIA & ITS PEOPLES

believe to this day, but, on the whole, the Roman Catholic mission priests have done good work among the natives. The regular priesthood, which is largely composed of half-breeds, is less highly spoken of. Some attribute the poorness of the educational system to the Church, which by the Constitution is given a good deal of power in this department. Education, it is laid down, must be "organized and directed in accordance with the Catholic religion."

Sad Results of an Evil System

Of the negroes, originally imported from Africa to do work which was too heavy for the native inhabitants, the American Minister already quoted from wrote that they were "idle, vain, superstitious, cruel, cunning and brutal." A heavy indictment! Few people who know them have any good word to say for them. They were imported as slaves to make the Spaniards rich. No effort was ever spent on trying to civilize them. Now that they are free from control those consequences appear which might have been foreseen. They dwell for the most part in the hotter and more unhealthy regions, but the heat and the unhealthiness seem to agree with them. They do as little work as they need. Morals they have none, and their habits are unpleasant, to say the least. Yet, as experience has shown elsewhere, the African negro can be led upwards in the scale of human development and can be made a useful citizen and a self-respecting man.

Mosquitoes, Mud, and Alligators

The unhealthiness mentioned, which prevails over large areas, is due chiefly to the damp heat of the river regions and to the mosquitoes which carry the germs of disease. On the Magdalena river they are of specially stalwart build and fierce in proportion. It is told how a swarm of them which had driven a river steamer's crew below decks, followed the men down and tried to burst in the cabin doors! If that story must be set beside the tale of the pulpit, there is no doubt that the mosquitoes have sometimes so maddened cattle on

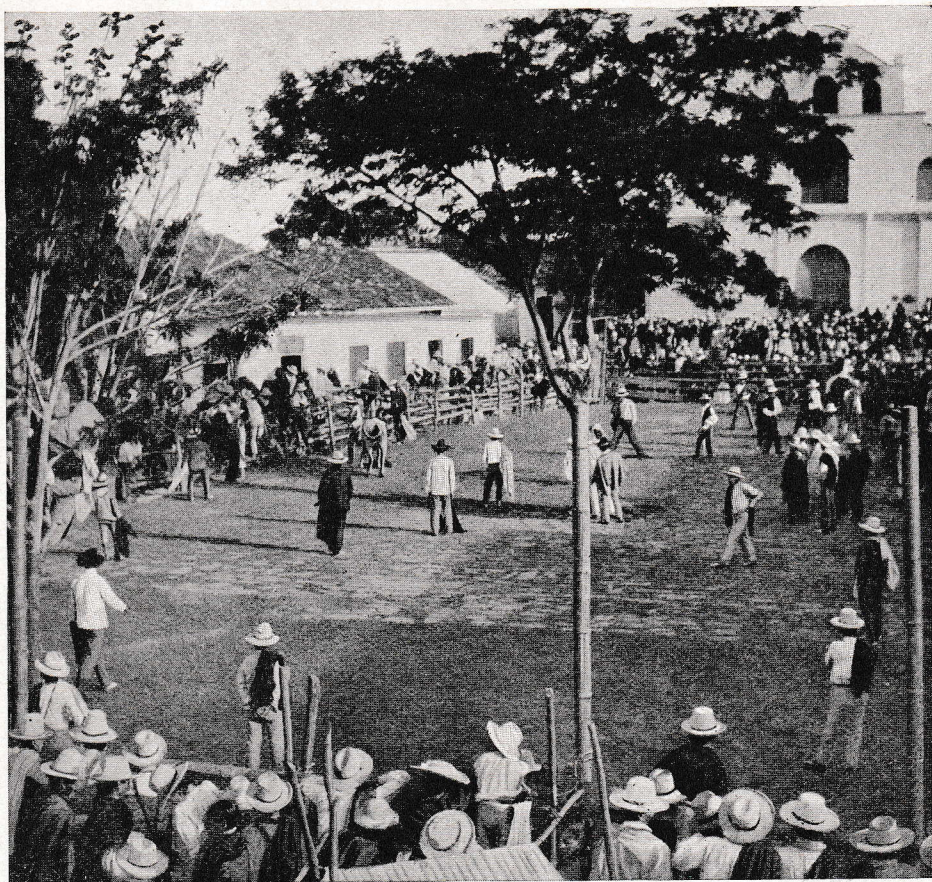
board the steamers as to make them jump into the stream.

The Magdalena, the chief river in the Republic, is full of mud and alligators. The alligators lie so thick along the banks that travellers are told it is possible to walk for miles on their backs without touching earth. The river is difficult to navigate because of the numbers of sandbanks in its course which frequently shift their shape or position and cause the steamers to run aground. Tourists do not welcome any lengthening of the voyage, for the food is very bad and the dirt disgusting. The boats are like those on the Mississippi, described by Dickens in "Martin Chuzzlewit." They burn wood fuel, and tie up for hours sometimes in order to take it on board. Yet travellers have been known to wish themselves back even upon the river steam-boats after a short experience of land travel away from the railroad.

Penitential Progress Overland

In bumping ox-carts on rough tracks, or on mule-back up and down mountains, they think with regret of the smoothness of river transport. Their aching bodies yearn for the dolce far niente of the chair on deck, shaded from the sun. By some the variety and the vicissitudes of such travel are found amusing. They enjoy the company at out-of-the-way inns, the strange characters they meet in them, the open-air life, the beauty of the changing scene. Where there are no villages, rest-houses for travellers are kept up. These are dirty, but their shelter is accepted gratefully when there is no other available.

Near the mouth of the Magdalena river is Puerto Colombia, which disputes with Cartagena the honour of being the chief port of the country. That place was once held firmly by Cartagena, until it was superseded by Barranquilla, some distance up the river. To-day Barranquilla is the chief river port, and has a railway to Puerto Colombia. A description of Savanilla, from which Puerto Colombia is an offshoot, written some thirty years ago, shows how small its



COLOMBIAN TOREADORS IN THE RING AT ST. ANA, TOLIMA

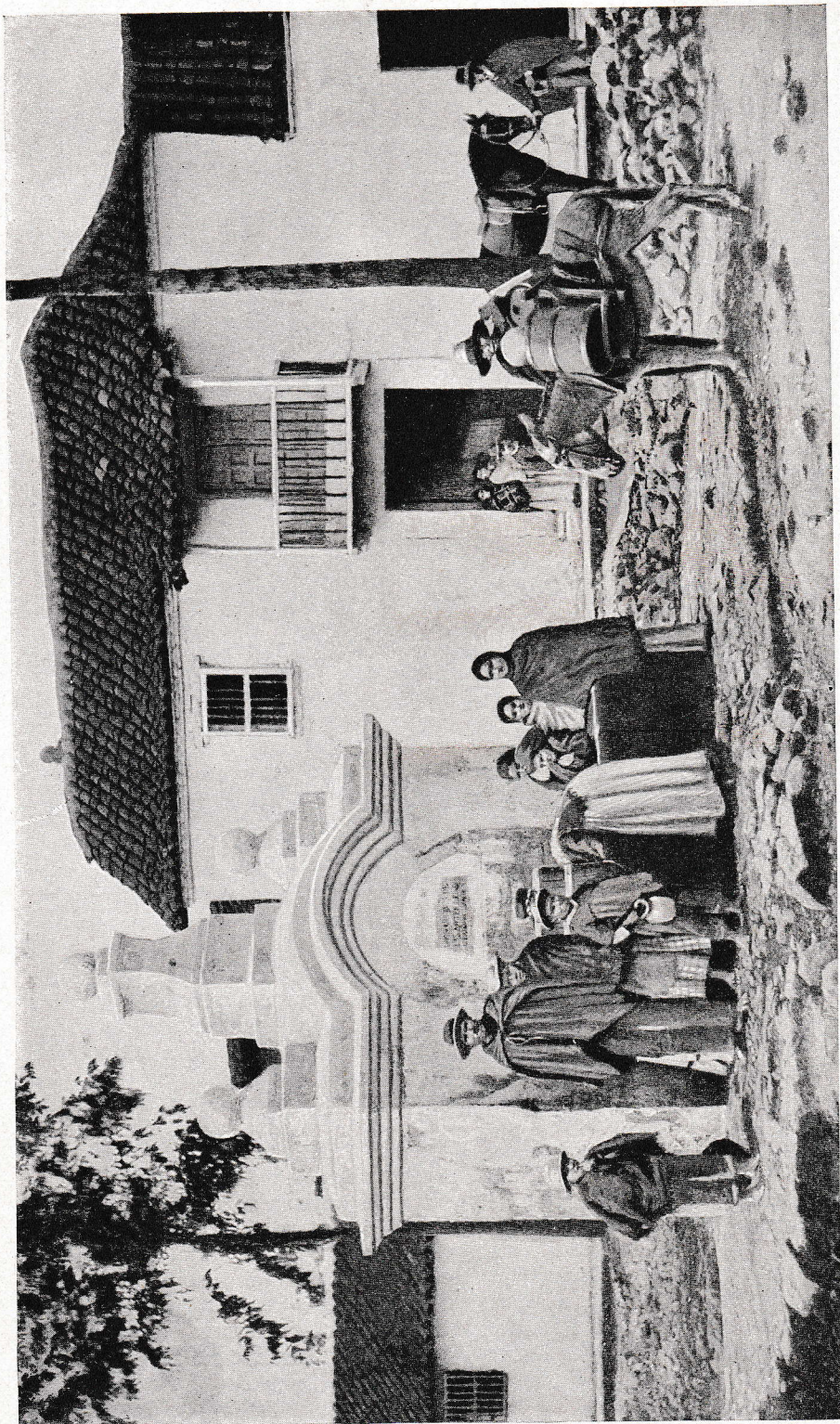
The bull-fight, the national sport of the Spaniard, is no unusual sight in the department of Tolima, and never fails to draw together a large throng of enthusiastic spectators from the Spanish and Indian communities. It is the favourite diversion of many of the workers in the far-famed Tolima gold mines, and no great holiday would be deemed complete which had not witnessed this spectacle

Photo, Edwin Edwards

beginnings were. It was then a desolate spit of sand, uninhabited save for a colony of longshoremen, boatmen and "roustabouts," who swarmed "like so many animals in filthy huts built of palm leaves," and exchanged the money they earned for wine in the disreputable saloons. "Murder is frequent among them," the description went on, "and fighting their chief amusement."

All that belongs to the past, and the change which has been brought to pass there may be typical of a change that will come over the Republic as a whole now that it is in closer touch with the United States and with Europe. It has a broad basis of resources on which to

build, and as its future prospects expand, so will a Colombian nation be formed. This will be, in the opinion of those who know the country well, a mixture of Spanish and Indian. There is no race barrier in the Republic. No one is ashamed of being a mestizo (half-breed). Most of these are labourers, small farmers, fishermen, domestic servants, artisans or shopkeepers. But many are found among the lawyers, doctors and business men. The number of families with an unmixed Spanish descent is small and grows smaller. The new race is in process of formation. How it will turn out must be doubtful for a century or two.



WHERE COLOMBIANS MEET TO PASS THE TIME OF DAY WHILE DRAWING WATER FROM THE FOUNTAIN

All the world over the well or the pool serves as a centre for gossip and the circulation of the news of the day. At this decrepit, whitewashed fountain on the outskirts of Bogotá a crowd of citizens may be seen at all hours of the day drawing water for their household needs. Those who live in the outlying districts carry it home in casks strapped on their mules

Colombia

II. The Republic's Long Fight for Freedom

By F. Loraine Petre

Author of "The Republic of Colombia," etc.

SPANISH settlements at Santa Marta and Cartagena, on the northern coast of what is now the Republic of Colombia, were founded early in the sixteenth century; but it was not till 1536 that Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada set forth southwards. A year later, he reached the plateau of Bogotá with only 170 followers out of the 1,000 with whom he had left Santa Marta. The rest had perished in the swamps of the Magdalena valley, from disease or the attacks of wild beasts and wilder savages. For nearly three centuries the history of the Kingdom of New Granada, as Quesada called his conquest in memory of his Spanish birth-place, differs only in detail from that of the other Spanish-American colonies.

The native population, less civilized and more submissive than Mexicans or Peruvians, were never a source of anxiety after their first subjugation. Treated virtually as a slave by his conquerors, made to work in conditions fatal to his health, the native Indian found his lot only slightly ameliorated by the introduction of the African slave to take his place on work which spelt death for him. Both these classes counted for nothing with the temporary Spanish administrators, generally men sent out from the mother country, who looked forward to returning to Europe, after a few years of exile, enriched by the spoil of the countries for the benefit of which they were supposed to work.

Spain's Vicious Colonial Policy

The home Government professed, and perhaps felt, great interest in and affection for its new subjects, and sent out a steady stream of orders and laws designed to provide for their spiritual and bodily welfare. Of the former the Inquisition, of the latter the viceroys, captains-general, presidents, and their subordinates were the curators—not a satisfactory agency in either case. Both were too far away in time and space to be controlled from Spain, and an administrator of a colony, if called to account for his stewardship, could rely on impunity, provided he could claim credit for ample remittances of treasure and strict attention to Spain's commercial policy.

But there was another class from which the revolt against Spain eventually proceeded. The Creoles, descendants of the original Conquistadores or of other domiciled immigrants, were sometimes of pure

Spanish descent, more often the offspring of intermarriages or illicit connexions with the native population. They were, by law, eligible for the highest administrative posts; in practice, all the plums of the military and civil services fell to the officials from Spain and their hangers-on.

Naturally, the Creole hated the Spanish official, who repaid hatred with contempt. Both Spaniard and Creole oppressed the Indian who, when he found himself compelled by circumstances to side with one or the other, was only swayed in his choice by personal or local considerations. The narrow and selfish colonial policy of Spain aimed at extracting from the New World every possible ounce of gold and silver, of cotton and wool, and other things which she did not herself produce. At the same time, by suppressing every industry, such as weaving or viticulture, which could compete with her own, she sought to create a dumping ground for her own surplus products.

Bolívar's Dream and Disillusionment

It must be clearly understood that when revolt at last came, it was the movement, not of the Indians or the slaves, but of the Creoles. Discontent with the rule of Spain was rife when the successful revolt of the British North American colonies held out the first hopes of throwing off the yoke. The country, indeed, was ripe for rebellion, but the Creoles, unlike the North American colonists, had much to learn before they were fitted to bear the responsibilities of self-government. A few half-hearted insurrections in the latter part of the eighteenth century were easily subdued. With the crippling of Spain by Napoleon's action came the Creoles' opportunity. The first serious attempts to throw off the yoke in New Granada occurred in 1810; but it took nearly ten years of alternate victory and defeat, of massacring and being massacred, before Simon Bolívar, passing the Andes from Venezuela, finally broke the Spanish power at the battle of Boyacá, August 7, 1819.

At one time the Liberator thought he had succeeded in uniting in one vast republic of Colombia the territories now constituting the states of Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador. But before he died, Venezuela and Ecuador had broken away, and even the presidency of Colombia had slipped from his hands. He died uttering despairing prognostications of the

COLOMBIA'S STORY

fate of the countries for which he had sacrificed his fortune and his life. They were not far wide of the truth; for the next three-quarters of a century is filled by a succession of civil wars, waged nominally for constitutional reforms, really, in the majority of cases, by rival candidates for power and personal aggrandisement.

In 1831 Santander succeeded the Liberator, and in 1832 a new constitution was framed. The state became the Republic of New Granada, a loose federation of provinces endowed with extensive powers of self-government. Santander's popularity soon waned, largely owing to his having honestly accepted for his state a fair share of the debt of Bolívar's greater Colombia. He was unable to secure the succession of his protégé Oando to the presidency, and up to 1841 civil war raged, ending in the triumph of Mosquera, who had been elected Santander's successor. A new constitution was framed in 1843, in accordance with Mosquera's views. When at last Oando succeeded in getting himself elected, there was a fresh constitution in 1853, which recognized the right of secession by the provinces, a right which had already been temporarily assumed by several of them. It was again exercised by Panamá and Antioquia in 1856 for a time.

Friction with Panamá

The conservatives, led by Ospino the lawyer, now had a short tenure of office, but were ejected in 1859 by a rebellion promoted by Mosquera the soldier. Of course, there was a new constitution, and this time the name of the state was changed to the United States of Colombia. Mosquera, having put down an insurrection in which the aid of Ecuador had been called in by the insurgents, entered on his last presidential term in 1864, was impeached by Congress, and banished. Fighting still went on for a time, especially in Panamá, and then followed some years of very necessary peace under Presidents Salgar, Murillo, Perez, Parra, and Trujillo. Under the first of these the first treaty in connexion with the Panamá Canal was concluded with the U.S.A.

During the next ten years, the chief figure in the presidential chair was Rafael Nuñez, who occupied it for three terms. He had to suppress several revolts, which broke out when his supporters, who had elected him in his absence, believing him to be a liberal, discovered that he had, in the meanwhile, changed his views. On the plea that his health would not stand residence in Bogotá, most of his last presidency was spent in Cartagena, the government at Bogotá being carried on by his deputies. He was responsible for the new constitution of 1886, which reduced the sovereign states of the Republic to the status of departments of a centralized republic, and once more, for the last time so far, renamed the state the Republic of Colombia.

Canal Complications Settled

Nuñez died in 1895, and was succeeded by Caro, his deputy at Bogotá. His successor, the aged conservative San Clemente, was deposed by his vice-president, Marroquin, and died in confinement. A fresh revolt against Marroquin broke out in 1900 and lasted till 1903. There was much fighting on the Isthmus of Panamá, which induced the U.S.A. and Great Britain to land marines to protect their nationals. On November 3, 1903, Panamá seceded and declared its independence. The part played by the U.S.A. in this revolt is mixed up with all the complicated negotiations between the U.S.A., M. de Lesseps and his successors, and Colombia, regarding the Panamá Canal. It is said that the commander of the Colombian troops on the isthmus was induced to ship them on a British steamer, and, when he repented him of his treason, found his return to the shore barred by American troops. Colombia has always maintained that America was mainly responsible for the secession which, at any rate, enabled her to get the Canal question settled to her satisfaction.

When President Marroquin's term ended, in 1904, he was succeeded by General Rafael Reyes, who promptly dissolved a hostile Congress, and propounded a new



THE REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA

COLOMBIA'S STORY

constitution to the Constituent Assembly, which he summoned in 1905. Under this, though the presidential term was fixed at four years, Reyes himself was installed for ten. He appeared to be virtually a dictator; but opposition soon commenced, and an attempt to assassinate him was made in 1906. By 1909, finding the opposition too strong, he retired to Europe, leaving his understudy, J. Holguín, in charge till Congress could be assembled to elect a successor. Their choice fell on General Valencia, who was elected for one year only. After him the presidents have been Carlos Restrepo, 1910-14; José Vicente Concha, 1914-18; and Marco Fedel Suarez.

One of the questions which, since the emancipation, has always threatened external trouble, is that of the boundaries of Colombia on the side of Venezuela, Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador. More than once there had been talk of reconstituting the greater Colombia of Bolívar, which would, of course, have solved the difficulty with Venezuela and Ecuador. But the negotiations fell through, owing to the objections raised by the two last-named republics. In 1883 an agreement was come to, referring the case between Colombia and Venezuela to the arbitration of the King of Spain, whose decision was promulgated in 1891. The rival claims of Colombia and Brazil to territory about the head waters of the Amazon and its

tributaries are still unsettled. In the case of Peru, attempts have been made to come to an agreement, and in that of Ecuador a treaty on the subject has actually been signed.

Ever since Panamá seceded in 1903, negotiations had been going on with the U.S.A. Colombia, as stated, attributed the secession of Panamá to American action, and maintained that she could have recovered her lost province, had not the U.S.A. stood in the way and prohibited invasion by sea, practically the only way of reaching Panamá. America has offered the following terms in full satisfaction: A payment of £5,000,000 in five yearly instalments of £1,000,000 each; Colombia to be allowed free passage through the Panamá Canal for warships, troops, and war material; coal, oil, and marine salt, produced in Colombia for home consumption, also to be allowed free passage. The last two offers would bring the Pacific provinces into communication with Bogotá, from which they are separated by the great range of the Central Cordillera.

Several years of internal and external peace have undoubtedly enabled Colombia to make great strides, and to attract to her some of the capital which is so badly needed for opening out her internal communications and the vast mineral and agricultural resources which she possesses. It is to be hoped that political stability, based on unselfish patriotism, may ensure the continuance of peace and progress.

COLOMBIA: FACTS AND FIGURES

The Country

Occupies north-west corner of South America, bordered east by Venezuela and Brazil, on south by Ecuador and Peru. Area about 440,850 square miles. Coastline on Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean about 3,000 miles, with good harbours. Country is within tropics; startling contrasts of altitude, climate, character and products, between Andean region (Western, Central, and Eastern Cordilleras), roughly parallel to Pacific Coast and immense plains stretching eastward into regions of the Orinoco and Amazon. Southern part of Andean system has highest peaks (Mount Huila, 18,600 ft.). Independence of Panamá (dealt with separately), formally recognized in 1921. Population about 5,850,000, mainly of Spanish, African, and Indian origin; pure whites about one-fifth; Indian half-breeds more than half.

Government and Constitution

Republic consists of fourteen departments, three intendencies, and six commissaries, under President elected for four years, with Congress (Senate of thirty-four elected for four years and House of Representatives of ninety-two members elected for two years).

Defence

Army service compulsory for from one to one and a half years. Peace effective about 6,000; war effective about 50,000. No navy.

Commerce and Industries

Coffee plant, fig and cinchona trees flourish in temperate zone; rice, cacao, sugar cane, bananas, yams, tobacco, indigo, cotton, caoutchouc, vegetable ivory, medicinal plants, resins, dye woods in hot region. Rubber tree grows wild.

Large crops of potatoes, grain and leguminous plants raised in cold region. Much of soil fertile; wealth of iron, copper, lead, platinum, coal, sulphur, zinc, antimony, gold, silver, and precious stones, but land and minerals little developed. Petroleum exists. Cattle raising extensive in temperate zone. Panamá hat industry of growing importance. Exports (largely coffee, hides, bananas, rubber, gold, silver, platinum) valued in 1920 at £14,074,349; imports (foodstuffs, drugs, metals, cotton goods), £18,845,054. External trade mainly with U.S.A. and Great Britain. Monetary unit, gold dollar equal to one-fifth of pound sterling. Metric system adopted in 1857.

Communications

Railway mileage about 900. Inland traffic mainly by river. Magdalena navigable for 900 miles, tributaries affording some 200 miles in addition. Government telegraph lines, about 13,640 miles.

Religion and Education

State religion Roman Catholic, but other faiths permitted. Primary education free but not compulsory. Educational establishments include 5,300 primary schools with 337,300 pupils; seventy-three secondary schools with 7,300 pupils; twenty-eight professional schools with 2,780 pupils, thirty-five art and trade schools with 1,600 pupils; and universities of Bogotá, Medellín, Cartagena, Popayan, Pasto.

Chief Towns

Bogotá, capital (population about 160,000), Barranquilla (64,540), Manizales (43,200), Cartagena (51,380), Medellín (79,140), Cali (45,800), Bucaramanga (24,900), Cúcuta (29,490).



"BETTER BUILD SCHOOL-ROOMS FOR THE BOY THAN CELLS AND GIBBETS FOR THE MAN"

Education is taken very seriously in Costa Rica, and school attendance is not only legally compulsory, but is actually enforced in all but the very remote districts. There are numerous good primary schools and a few good secondary schools for both boys and girls, besides a training college for teachers in the capital. For students of exceptional promise there are State scholarships tenable at European universities

Photo. Percy F. Martin